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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
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09/341,635 07/14/99 FERREIRA R DEXNON/087/P

IM22/0501

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EXAMINER

TORRES VELAZQUEZ, N

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1771

6

DATE MAILED: 05/01/01

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/341,635

Applicant(s)

FERREIRA ET AL.

Examiner

Norca L. Torres-Velazquez

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 February 2001.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 and 6-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 5 and 11-17 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

- 15) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 16) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 17) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 18) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 19) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 20) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. Applicant's arguments filed on February 23, 2001 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

a. Applicants argue that the DOERER reference teaches the use of a dry process, instead of the wet slurry process that is used in their invention.

The rejected claims 1-4 and 6-10 are product claims and in the previous office action (paper 4), it has been shown that the claimed product appears to be the same to that of the prior art, although produced by a different process. The burden shifts to Applicant to come forward with evidence establishing an unobvious difference between the claimed product and the prior art product. *In re Marosi*, 218 USPQ 289, 292 (Fed. Cir. 1983).

Claim Objections

2. Claim 7 remains objected to because of the following informalities: the word "or" in the third line of this claim should be replaced by "and". Further, the word "and" in the second line of claim 7 should be replaced by "of". Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1- 3, 6-7 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by DOERER et al. (US 4,418,031).

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DOERER et al. discloses a moldable fibrous mat and teaches the use of wood, jute, sisal, rayon, acetate and cotton as suitable base fibers for the flexible mat. (Column 2, lines 49-50) The reference uses a mix that may consist of about 70% to 98% by weight of base fibers and about 2% to 30% by weight of thermoplastic carrier fibers to provide a continuous web of mat material. (Column 4, lines 55-57).

5. Claims 1-4 and 6-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by BEARD et al. (EP 0908303A2).

BEARD et al. discloses vehicle interior decorative panel, such as a headliner, that utilizes a blend of fibers to define a batt sandwiched on opposite sides by mats. The mats are made of a fibrous material, which can be a natural fiber. (Column 1, lines 38-40). The reference teaches that the mats are made of a natural fiber such as jute, sisal or kenaf having a length of approximately 2 inches which are blended with a thermoplastic fiber, such as polypropylene, polyester or polyethylene. The ratio of natural fibers to the thermoplastic fibers is from about 85 to 80 percent natural fibers to thermoplastic fibers. (Column 2, lines 56-58 to Column 3, lines 1-5).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over DOERER et al. as applied to claims 1- 3, 6-7 and 10 above.

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It is noted that DOERER et al. is silent with respect to the claimed basis weight and elasticity. It would be obvious to optimize the basis weight and elasticity depending on how much strength is wanted in the material.

8. Claims 5 and 11-17 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The prior art fails to teach a nonwoven web as claimed in this application that includes a pulp fiber component, or further a multilayer sheet material comprising the nonwoven web and a pulp web secured to it.

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.


GEBRESELASSI ET AL. WO 99/02335


10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Norca L. Torres-Velazquez whose telephone number is 703-306-5714. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 7:30-5:00 pm and alternate Fridays.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Terrel Morris can be reached on 703-308-2414. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9310 for regular communications and 703-872-9311 for After Final communications.

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Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1495.

nlt 
April 30, 2001


ELIZABETH M. COLE
PRIMARY EXAMINER